

SPRAGUE FIELD

Sprague Field is located off of Worcester Street just north of Wellesley Square. An ice pond and its associated wetlands once existed on this site, but was filled and the area became known as Wellesley's "Back Bay". Since most of the filled land was used as a dump, on occasion an old car or barrel in the dump degenerates and the land above it subsides.

Sprague Field was called Junior High Field due to its proximity to the school. When the Junior High became a middle school, it was renamed Sprague Field because of its location near the Sprague Recreation Building at Oak and School Streets.

School grounds in Wellesley are maintained by the Park and Tree Division of the Department of Public Works. Any plan proposed for the grounds must strike a balance between the athletic needs of the School and Recreation Departments and the maintenance needs of the Park and Tree Division. In 1983, the Recreation Department requested \$150,000 from the Annual Town Meeting to provide a Little League field and two soccer fields at Sprague Field. The Little League Commission was unable to raise its share of the funds needed for the project so the plans were abandoned.

In 1984, the Soccer League became interested in developing three regulation fields at Sprague Field. This league was successful and raised \$35,000 which was matched by funds from the 1985 Annual Town Meeting. This project includes an irrigation system, turf improvements, and portable soccer goals. The irrigation system is fed by an underground 10,000 gallon tank, which is replenished by ground water.

Today, the 26 acre Sprague Field serves as the "flagship" or main playing fields for the Soccer League as well as serving the School and Recreation departments. In addition, maintenance costs for the field are going lower each year as the project greatly reduces all but the most routine maintenance needs.